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Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 PC-01 CIAE-00 PM-04
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-06
CCO-00 TRSE-00 ACDA-07 ARA-06 /106 W
----------161651Z 062764 /42
O 161545Z MAR 77
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2359
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LISBON IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
SECDEF WASH DC IMMEDIATE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER//ECJ4/7 IMMEDIATE
DIA WASH DC IMMEDIATE
USIA WASH DC IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 2356

PASS PEACE CORPS
USIA FOR IAA, IOP

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, PINS, AEMR, CG, AO
SUBJECT: OPERATION SHABA: MILITARY UPDATE

1. ACCOMPANIED BY COL. PLENHARD, BELGIAN MILITARY ATTACHE, WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR GOB MILITARY ASSISTANCE, AND COL. THEPIN, CHIEF OF FRENCH MIRAGE MILITARY TEAM, AND CZAMISH MET WITH GENERAL BABIA AT 0900 TODAY TO DISCUSS PRESENT ENEMY/FRIENDLY SITUATION AND FAZ FUTURE PLANS. BABIA IS TO MEET WITH COL. MAMPA AND PRESIDENT MOBUTU AT 1030Z. MAMPA IS GROUND FORCE COMMANDER IN SHABA. WE ARE SCHEDULED TO MEET WITH MAMPA AND BABIA SOMETIME LATER IN THE
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DAY TO RECEIVE RESULTS OF MEETING.

2. BABIA STATED THAT HE HAD A PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION WITH MAMPA WHO ARRIVED LATE YESTERDAY FROM THE OPERATIONAL AREA. MAMPA INDICATED TO BABIA THAT ENEMY IS EMPLOYING CLASSIC GUERRILLA TYPE TACTICS. THEY ARE ADVANCING TO LOCATIONS IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO THEIR ATTACK OBJECTIVES DURING HOURS OF DARKNESS ON FOOT, GUIDED

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BY THE LOCAL FRIENDLY POPULATION, WHERE THEY DISPERSE. AS FAZ UNITS ADVANCE, THEY ARE AMBUSHED AT KEY AREAS. NOT ENCOUNTERING ENEMY ALONG THE ROUTE, FAZ UNITS ARE REPORTING TOWN AND VILLAGES CLEARED AND AN APPARENT ABSENCE OF ENEMY FORCES, ARE NOT DIGGING IN AND PREPARING DEFENSIVE POSITIONS UPON REACHING A TOWN OR VILLAGE, BUT ARE RATHER MILLING ABOUT. IT IS AT THIS TIME THAT THE ENEMY, WAITING IN AMBUSH, ATTACKS CAUSING CASUALTIES AND RETREAT AND ACCORDING TO BABIA, THE CONFUSED REPORTING.

3. FALL OF MASAJI (KEY CROSSROADS BETWEEN KASAJI AND MUTSHATSHA) WAS CRITICAL AND ACCORDING TO BABIA, WAS TYPICAL. THE ATTACK COMMENCED WITH THE FIRING OF TWO MORTAR ROUNDS, FOLLOWED BY INTENSE 50 CAL MACHINE GUN FIRES IN SUPPORT AND INFANTRY ADVANCED WITH TWO CUBAN PLATOONS AS LEAD ELEMENTS. PLENARD AT THIS POINT QUERIED HOW MAMPA KNEW THAT THEY WERE CUBANS. BABIA STATED THAT MAMPA'S G3 - LTC. MASAJE (PHONETIC) WAS ON THE SCENE DURING THE BATTLE AND THAT HE PERSONALLY HAD CONFIRMED THEIR PRESENCE.

4. ON THE OTHER HAND, HE NOTED WHEN FAZ TROOPS ENCOUNTER KATANGA GENDARMES, NAMPA TOLD HIM, THEY FIRE LARGE VOLUMES OF SMALL ARMS WITHOUT CAUSING MANY FRIENDLY CASUALTIES. CZAMISH QUERIED ON NUMBER OF FRIENDLY CASUALTIES. MAMPA STATED TO BABIA THAT THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY 200. THAT BEING THE CASE THEN, CZAMISH REPLIED, WE CAN CONSIDER THE 2ND PAPA BN AS INEFFECTIVE. BABIA CONFIRMED THIS. DE CONTINUED THAT HE ACCORDINGLY ORDERED THE BN, LOCATED AT KOLWEZI TO MUTSHATSHA.

5. BOTH CZAMISH AND PLENARD QUERIED RE FUTURE FAZ PLANS. A TASK FORCE CONSISTING OF FOUR COMPANIES, LEAD BY LTC DIKUTA
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WILL MOVE TO KAMINA ON AIR ZAIRE DC-10 AND DC-8 TODAY. TWO COMPANIES WILL BE DRAWN FROM KITONA AND ARE COMPOSED OF YOUNG SOLDIERS RECRUITED LAST YEAR. ACCORDINGLY, THEY WILL BE A LIGHT INFANTRY ELEMENT. TWO COMPANIES WILL BE DRAWN FROM KISANGANI COMPOSED OF OLD, EXPERIENCED SOLDIERS, TRAINED IN USE OF HEAVY WEAPONS. THEY WILL BE FORMED INTO A HEAVY INFANTRY ELEMENT. (COLUMN).

6. HE FURTHER PLANS TO MOVE THE BN, PRESENTLY LOCATED LUBUMBASHI, TO MUTSHATSHA TO REINFORCE THE DEFENSE OF THAT AREA. STATED IMPERATIVE WE STOP ENEMY ADVANCE. REMAINING UNITS IN LUBUMBASHI WILL BE THE 8TH BN AND THE 12TH BN. BABIA REMARKED THAT THESE BN'S ARE COMPOSED OF ALL OLD KATANGA PERSONNEL AND THEREFORE, HE DOES NOT PLAN TO USE THEM IN THE BATTLE AREA.

7. PLENARD QUERIED AS TO THE MISSION OF TASK FORCE DIKUTA. BABIA RESPONDED THAT DEPENDING ON THE SITUATION, IT MAY BE EMPLOYED TO REINFORCE MUTSHATSHA OR KOLWEZI OR TO COUNTER ATTACK KAMINA/SANDOA/DILOLO AXIS TO CUT OFF ENEMY REAR IF ENEMY

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ADVANCE IS STOPPED. THEPIN QUERIED ON STATUS OF MIRAGES IN LUBUMBASHI. BABIA RESPONDED THAT FAZA LIMITED RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS ARE CURRENTLY DOWN BECAUSE OF LACK OF FUEL (WEATHER IN AREA NOT CONDUCIVE TO MIRAGE RECON). BABIA RECEIVED A REPORT YESTERDAY THAT A RECON INDICATED "LONG COLUMNS OF MEN AND EQUIPMENT ACCROSS THE BORDER INSIDE ANGOLA." HE CALLED REPORT SKETCHY BUT IS ATTEMPTING TO VERIFY. BABIA FURTHER STATED HE SENT KIKUNDA (CHIEF OF STAFF - AIR FORCE) TO KOLWEZI TODAY, TO DISCUSS AIR SUPPORT WITH COL. ELUKI WHO IS THE CURRENT GROUND COMMANDER.

8. CZAMISH QUERIED ON PLANS FOR AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE. BABIA STATED HE IS PLANNING TO MOVE THE CESSNA 310'S FROM KINSHASA TO KAMINA, IN ORDER TO PROVIDE CONTINUOUS AIR RECON OF BATTLE AREA DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS. THEPIN QUERIED ON AVGAS AT KAMINA FOR CESSNAS. BABIA STATED THAT THERE ARE 10,000 LITRES CURRENTLY AT KAMINA AND HE WAS HOPING TO PUSH SOME MORE THERE SHORTLY. HE NOTED CRITICALLY SHORT AIRLIFT RESOURCES OF FAZA.
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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 16-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Status: NATIVE
Subject: OPERATION SHABA: MILITARY UPDATE
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